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Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

Letter dated 31 March 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

In that regard, and in accordance with the request made by the Chairman on 13 September 2005, I enclose herewith additional information from the national Government in connection with the initial report submitted in November 2004 (see annex).

(*Signed*) Eladio **Loizaga**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 31 March 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

Observations of Paraguay on the report on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) concerning weapons of mass destruction

The Government of the Republic of Paraguay wishes to thank the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for having transmitted the report on Paraguay's compliance with that resolution and the associated matrix.

In that connection, the Government of Paraguay fully shares the Committee's interest in establishing a transparent and cooperative dialogue on compliance with the aforementioned resolution, with a view to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and taking the measures necessary to ensure that they are gradually eradicated.

Paraguay has no substantive objections to the information contained in the Committee's report. However, it takes the view that a number of new elements, which came to light during the period between the submission of the relevant national report in October 2004 and the transmittal of the Committee's observations in August 2005 and which complement the Committee's report, should be included.

Accordingly, Paraguay is of the opinion that the following comments should be added:

- Paraguay participated actively in the Conference to Consider and Adopt Proposed Amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which took place in Vienna, Austria, from 4 to 8 July 2005. In that connection, the Sustainable Development Policy Adviser of the Office of the Vice-President endorsed, on behalf of the Government, the amendments adopted by the Conference, which are currently in the process of being approved by Parliament.

- On 16 September 2005, during this sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism was signed at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Paraguay's Minister for Foreign Affairs signed the Convention and the steps required to secure its approval by the National Congress are now being taken.

- Although article 8 of the Constitution expressly provides for "the prohibition of the manufacture, assembly, import, sale and use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons", Paraguay takes the view that the establishment of penalties for the trafficking, sale and use of such weapons is an issue that should be addressed in the context of the reform of its legislation. During that reform, the mechanisms required for the incorporation of offences connected with weapons of mass destruction in all their forms into the list of punishable acts set out in either the Paraguayan Penal Code or any other specific laws established to govern such acts will be introduced.

- While Paraguay solemnly reaffirms that it does not have any weapons of mass destruction or any supplies or goods required for the production of such weapons, it is fully aware of the dangers posed by the traffic in or transit through its territory of components or materials that could be used in their manufacture or production. Consequently, by means of various internal rules and regulations, the Customs Directorate and other national institutions have stepped up the checks required for the proper control of the entry into and/or exit from national territory of dangerous goods and materials.

- Lastly, it should be pointed out that the National Congress is continuing its consideration of the draft law on the establishment of a national regulatory authority on radiological and nuclear issues. Such an authority would be the only entity responsible for addressing all questions relating to radioactive materials at the national level, and its governing body would be composed of representatives from the various bodies with responsibilities and obligations in that area, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of the Environment.